

Town of Charleston
Selectboard Meeting 11/23/2022

MINUTES

Attending: Selectpersons Patrick Austin, Peter Moskovites and Larry Young; Highway Crew Members Wendell Hastings and Roger Patenaude; Town Clerk & Treasurer Teri Gray; Selectboard Clerk Colleen Kellogg.

THESE MINUTES ARE UNOFFICIAL UNTIL APPROVED AT THE NEXT MEETING.

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm by Patrick Austin, Chair. Mr. Austin opened the meeting by offering condolences to the Pepin family and thanks to the late Foreman Bernie Pepin for his years of service to the Town of Charleston.

Colleen Kellogg presented 2023 contracts for roadside mowing and pavement sweeping for board signature, and these were added to the agenda.

NEW BUSINESS

With the sudden passing of Foreman Bernie Pepin, the Chair asked crewmembers Wendell Hastings and Roger Patenaude about daily highway operations and if there are any issues. Mr. Hastings said road maintenance is going well, and he is working to get a handle on when maintenance like oil changes were done on each piece of equipment and when this will be needed. The International (Truck #3) has a recall on a connecting rod bushing that can cause the engine to shut down and may be a safety risk. Board members advised him to contact Clark's to see if it is urgent, when they can get it in, or if it can wait until after plowing season. If it's urgent, the town will figure out how to make it work.

Wings have been installed on plow trucks, they've cut trees, and got rid of 6 barrels of used oil from the shop. The weather has been good, but Westmore mountain has been getting snow. Mr. Austin said there may be a family on Hinton Hill Rd that wants school bus pickup, and Mr. Hastings cautioned against it as passable road conditions and safe turnaround cannot be guaranteed at bus time.

Mr. Hastings said that since he has plowed Charleston only twice, he is still learning the town and how much sand to put down on certain spots, but he is working to learn it. He's been taking care of Echo Lake Rd and Ten Mile Square in addition to his route—it took extra hour to do the route, and he was only sanding. Mr. Austin hopes townspeople will be understanding while the crew is shorthanded. Mr. Hastings' cell phone number is on the garage answering machine in case of emergency.

Mr. Austin suggests the town advertise for a Truck Driver/Skilled Laborer immediately. Board members agreed to post the job for a week in the Chronicle, Newport Daily Express, and Caledonian-Record. Compensation will be based on experience and qualifications. A draft ad was reviewed and approved. Hastings and Patenaude confirmed that they could cover all routes for a couple of weeks while the board seeks applicant—as long as extra hours aren't a concern.

Mr. Austin said the Selectboard really appreciates how Mr. Hastings has stepped up to keep the highway department running smoothly, and they will meet in executive session later in the meeting to figure out jobs going forward. Mr. Hastings said he needs time to really get the town under his feet, and Larry Young said the process takes about a year. There was discussion of how to track the highway budget and what purchases need advance approval.

OLD BUSINESS

Following up on proposals from David White Trucking approved at the last meeting, contracts with Mr. White for mowing and sweeping services were approved and signed.

ANNOUNCEMENTS & INFORMATION

Mr. Austin said he is waiting to hear from JA McDonald about returning to the Barton pit and completing the crushing job.

The Chair called for Executive Session at 6:30 pm to discuss personnel. Executive Session ended at 6:47 pm. Mr. Austin moved to offer the Highway Foreman job to Wendell Hastings, with a second by Peter Moskovites, and the matter was approved unanimously. Mr. Austin will contact Mr. Hastings to make the offer.

Seeing no other business, Mr. Austin moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mr. Young, and the meeting was adjourned at 6:50 pm. The next meeting will be held Thursday, December 8, 2022 at 6:00 pm.

Approved this 8th day of December 2022:

Selectboard, Town of Charleston